

Even under house arrest, Daw Aung San Suu Kyi demonstrated unwavering and determined political leadership, provided inspiration, and garnered respect from the people of Burma and democracy-loving people around the world.

As one of the world's only imprisoned recipients, she was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 1991 for her nonviolent struggle against oppression, with the Norwegian Nobel Committee citing her as "one of the most extraordinary examples of civil courage in Asia in recent decades."

Today, however, we must not rejoice. Daw Aung San Suu Kyi has called on all world leaders to stay focused on the plight of each one of the millions of Burmese struggling against the military rule, on the over two thousand two hundred political prisoners suffering unjustly in Burmese prisons, and the thousands of women and children being systematically raped and taken as sex slaves and porters for the military whose rule they suffer under.

Aung San Suu Kyi was awarded both of the highest civilian awards in the United States: the Presidential Medal of Honor in 2000 which recognizes those individuals who have made "an especially meritorious contribution to the security or national interests of the United States, world peace, cultural or other significant public or private endeavors" and, in 2008, the Congressional Medal of Honor for her "courageous and unwavering commitment to peace, nonviolence, human rights, and democracy in Burma."

In one of her most famous speeches, she poignantly conveyed: "It is not power that corrupts but fear. Fear of losing power corrupts those who wield it and fear of the scourge of power corrupts those who are subject to it." Even Aung San Suu Kyi herself freely notes that her release does not constitute a change in the military junta regime's choices in leadership. Six days before her release were the highly-contested November 7th Burmese elections, which were clearly based on a fundamentally flawed process and demonstrated the regime's continued preference for repression and restriction.

Aung San Suu Kyi's freedom must not be restrained. She must be able to travel freely without fear of her recapture at any given moment. Furthermore, this resolution calls for the immediate and unconditional release of all political prisoners and prisoners of conscience in Burma, including Aung San Suu Kyi's supporters in the National League for Democracy and ordinary citizens of Burma, including ethnic minorities, who publicly and courageously speak out against the regime's many injustices.

The ruling junta in Burma must be denied hard currency to continue its campaign of repression and we can do that by working with governments around the world to strengthen sanction regimes against Burma. And, it is time for the Administration to appoint a United States Special Coordinator for Burma.

Madam Speaker, today the House of Representatives has the opportunity to celebrate Daw Aung San Suu Kyi's freedom. And, yet, we celebrate with a heavy heart for all of the millions still suffering in Burma. I urge my colleagues to stand firmly in solidarity with Aung San Suu Kyi and the people of Burma with your support of the passage of this resolution, human rights, an end to the junta-imposed vio-

lence, democratic progress, and for the release of all prisoners of conscience in Burma.

DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA ENACTMENT OF NATIONAL POPULAR VOTE

HON. CHELLIE PINGREE

OF MAINE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, December 15, 2010

Ms. PINGREE of Maine. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize and congratulate the District of Columbia for its recent enactment of the National Popular Vote bill, which would guarantee the Presidency to the candidate who receives the most popular votes in all 50 states and the District.

Just a few weeks ago, Mayor Fenty signed this important legislation, which was passed by unanimous consent by the D.C. Council. National Popular Vote is now law in 7 jurisdictions, and has been passed by 30 legislative chambers in 21 states.

The shortcomings of the current system stem from the winner-take-all rule. Presidential candidates have no reason to pay attention to the concerns of voters in states where they are comfortably ahead or hopelessly behind. In 2008, candidates concentrated over two-thirds of their campaign visits and ad money in just six closely divided "battleground" states. A total of 98 percent of their resources went to just 15 states. Voters in two thirds of the states are essentially just spectators to presidential elections.

Under the National Popular Vote, all the electoral votes from the enacting states would be awarded to the presidential candidate who receives the most popular votes in all 50 states and DC. The bill assures that every vote will matter in every state in every Presidential election.

I look forward to more states, all across the country passing this important piece of legislation.

PRIVATE ISAAC T. CORTES POST OFFICE

SPEECH OF

HON. JOSEPH CROWLEY

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, December 14, 2010

Mr. CROWLEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 6205, to honor Private Isaac T. Cortes, a Bronx native who was killed in combat in Iraq.

This legislation would rename the post office in his hometown in his honor.

Private Cortes was a son of the Bronx—he grew up in the Parkchester neighborhood, attending local public schools and Christopher Columbus High School.

His love for his hometown led him to work as a security guard at Yankee Stadium, a job that he was so proud to hold and that inspired him to a lifetime of service. While planning to become a New York City Police Officer, he decided to strengthen his skills and serve his country by joining the U.S. Army in 2006.

Private Cortes knew that this choice was dangerous. He also knew he would likely be sent to Iraq.

His family worried for him, but he knew what he had to do.

After training at Fort Benning and Fort Drum, Private Cortes was sent to Iraq in September of 2007. As a rifleman in the Infantry Squad with Charlie Troop, 1-71 Cavalry Squadron, Private Cortes performed weapons searches and humanitarian aid missions to help the local Iraqi people.

He loved the Army, and was prepared to make it his career. His family has described how proud he was to protect his country. He said the military was his "calling."

On November 27, 2007, just after Thanksgiving, Private Cortes was out on one of his combat patrols when an improvised explosive device was detonated near his vehicle in Amerli, Iraq—about 100 miles north of Baghdad.

Private Cortes was killed instantly, along with Specialist Benjamin Garrison, in the roadside attack. He was only 26 years old.

His awards and honors include the Purple Heart, the Bronze Star, the National Defense Service Medal, the Iraq Campaign Medal, the Global War on Terrorism Service Medal and the Army Service Ribbon.

The Bronx, the Congress and the Nation will always remember Private Cortes as a decorated soldier. But, I would also like to take a moment to ensure we forever remember Isaac, the man.

Isaac lived by the motto "Go big or go home." He was known for his big heart and his loving ways, which his family continues in his honor through blood donation events and clothing, food and toy drives.

He was known to his neighbors as a smiling face and a helpful hand, always willing to help carry groceries.

Even while overseas, his family was always in his heart, including his parents, grandparents, brother, nieces, aunts, uncles and cousins. And above all, he loved the little girl that he raised as his own daughter.

His family has kept his memory alive, and today we take the next step in honoring this Bronx native and his service to the United States.

Renaming the post office in the neighborhood where he grew up after him will serve as a reminder to us all of his courage, integrity and sacrifice. This legislation will ensure that his service and his spirit will never be forgotten.

WILL CHRISTIANITY SURVIVE IN IRAQ?

HON. FRANK R. WOLF

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, December 15, 2010

Mr. WOLF. Madam Speaker, I submit for the RECORD a letter I received from the Chaldean Assyrian Syriac Council of America regarding the plight of Iraq's ancient Christian community, which is increasingly under assault and facing near extinction from the lands they have inhabited for centuries. The Wall Street Journal just yesterday noted on its editorial page that "some still speak the Aramaic, the ancient language of Jesus Christ."

The Journal further noted that of "the 100,000 Christians who once lived in Mosul, Iraq, only some 5,000 are still there."